

REMARKS

Claims 1-51 are now pending in the present application. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the telephone conference with the Examiner conducted on July 6, 2005, and in light of the amendments to the claims and the arguments as set forth herein.

The allowance of claims 27-51 is gratefully acknowledged, as is the allowability of claims 2-7, 16-20, 24 and 25.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102:

Claims 1, 2, 8-15 and 21-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by several references of record, including Kinstler, U.S. Patent No. 6,406,100, Tanghetti, U.S. Patent No. 6,481,804, Heck et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,595,423, Eikhoff, U.S. Patent No. 5,829,843, and Plotkin, U.S. Patent No. 2,809,076. Claim 1 has been amended to define a wheel assembly that comprises, among other things, a wheel having a disk and a rim complementary to the disk, the disk and the rim including an outer surface, the rim including an outer edge extending circumferentially about the rim, a ring-shaped flange member separate from the wheel and complementary to the outer edge extending circumferentially about the rim, and a wheel clad member having a central portion and an outer periphery complementary to the center portion, wherein the outer periphery includes a circumferentially-extending channel that receives the flange member therein. As discussed with the Examiner during the above-referenced telephone interview, none of the references as currently cited disclose that which is defined in claim 1.

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Claim 15 has been amended to include similar limitations as to those discussed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 15 are in condition for allowance. Claims 2-14 and 16-26 are dependent from independent claims 1 and 15, respectively, which are in condition for allowance as noted above, and are therefore also in condition for allowance.

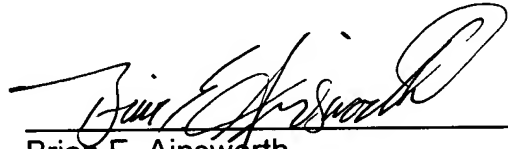
Accordingly, claims 1-51 are now in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowability is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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7-19-05

Date



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